

BHAGAT SINGH

THE CHEERFUL YOUNG MARTYR

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The route to your roots

BHAGAT SINGH

Bhagat Singh sang gustily as he walked to the gallows. Backed by a courageous family, this twenty-three-year-old firebrand was wedded to death. A free India was his heaven, and the martyrs of the freedom struggle were his gods. Using disguise and guile, persuasion and force, his life was a roller-coaster ride through an unjust system. But eventually, he awakened India and the world to the idea of liberty, and brought the mighty British Raj to its knees.

Script

Rajinder Singh and Subba Rao

Illustrations

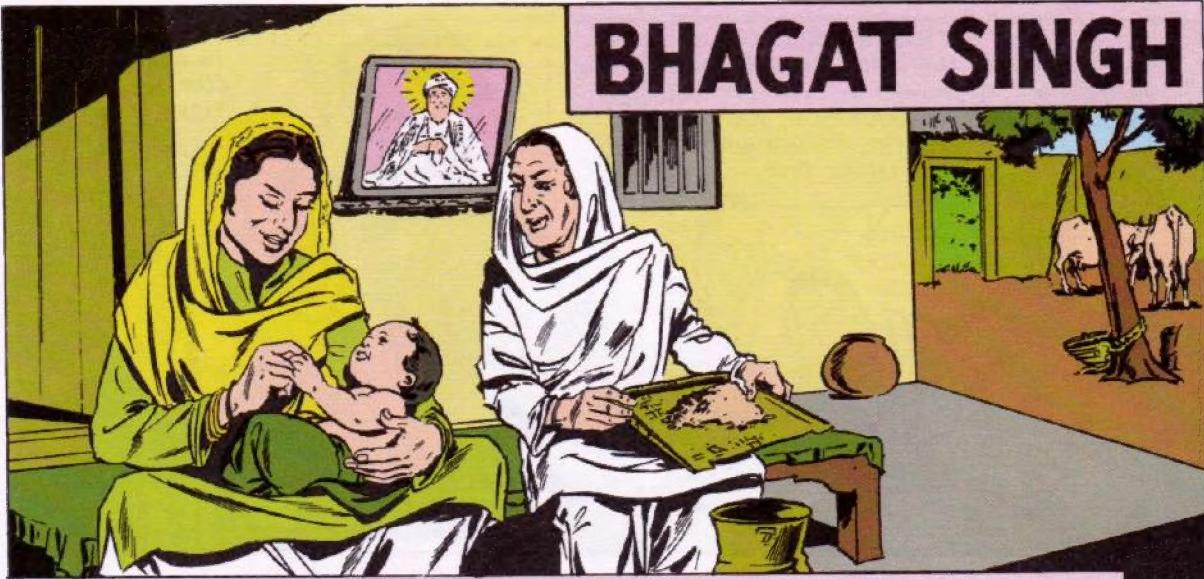
Dilip Kadam

Editor

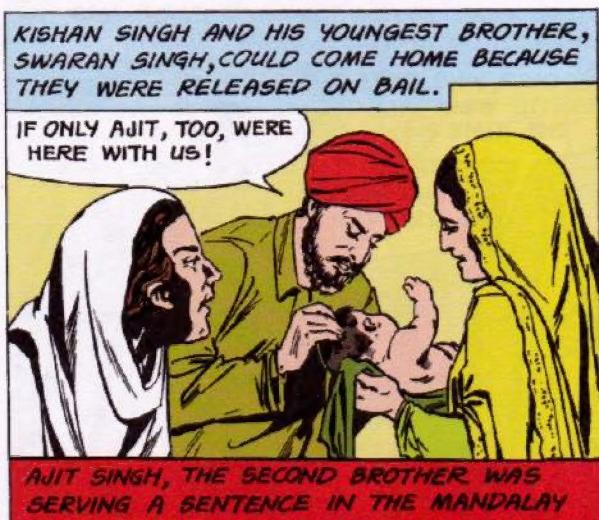
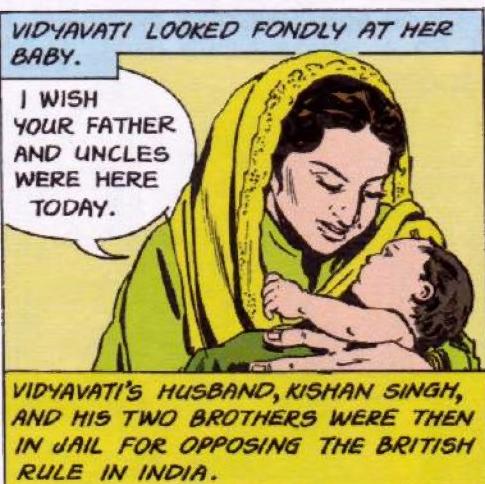
Anant Pai

Cover illustration by: Pratap Mulick

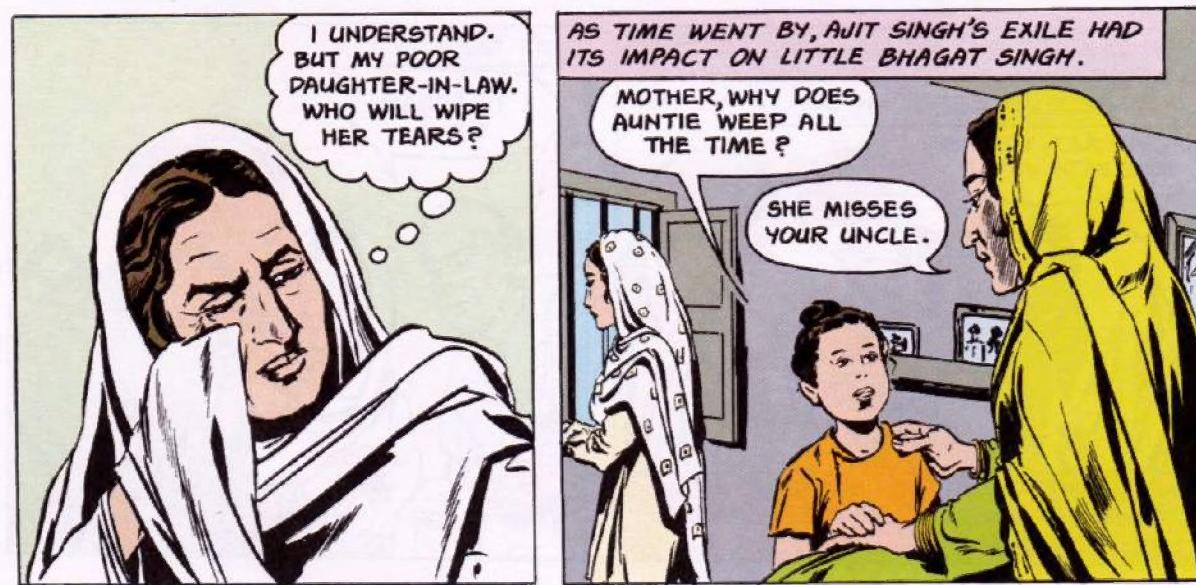
BHAGAT SINGH



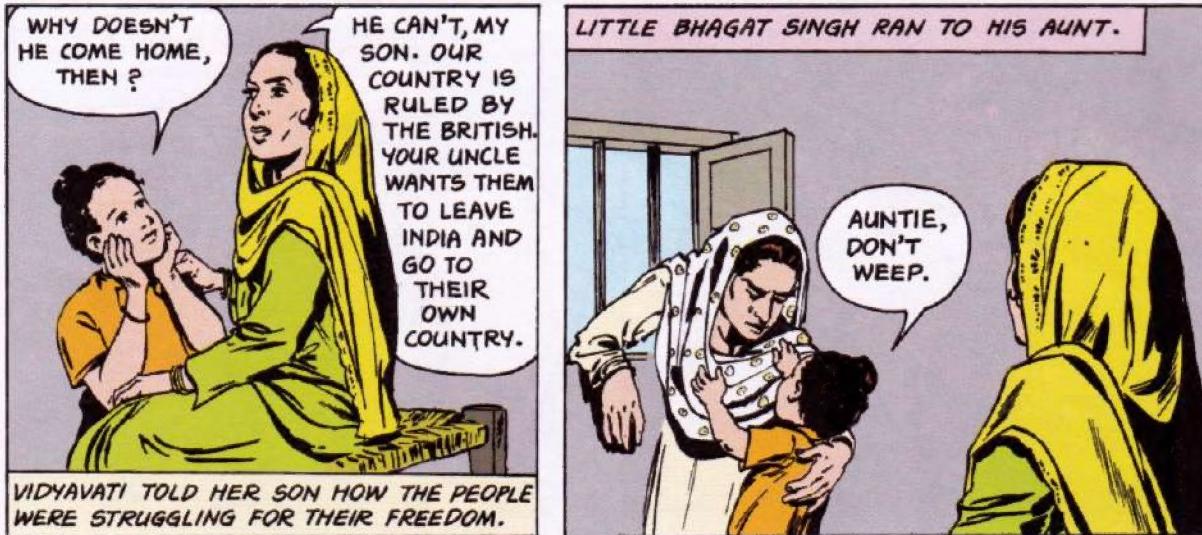
SEPTEMBER 27, 1907: IN THE VILLAGE OF BANGA, NEAR LAHORE, THE BIRTH OF A BABY BROUGHT JOY TO THE OTHERWISE GLOOMY HOUSEHOLD OF SARDAR KISHAN SINGH.

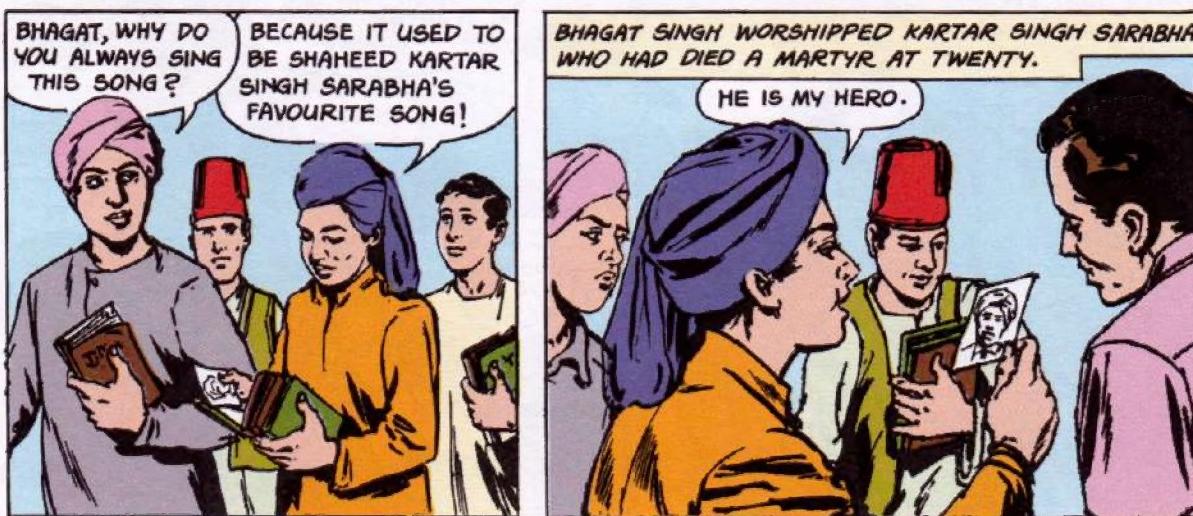
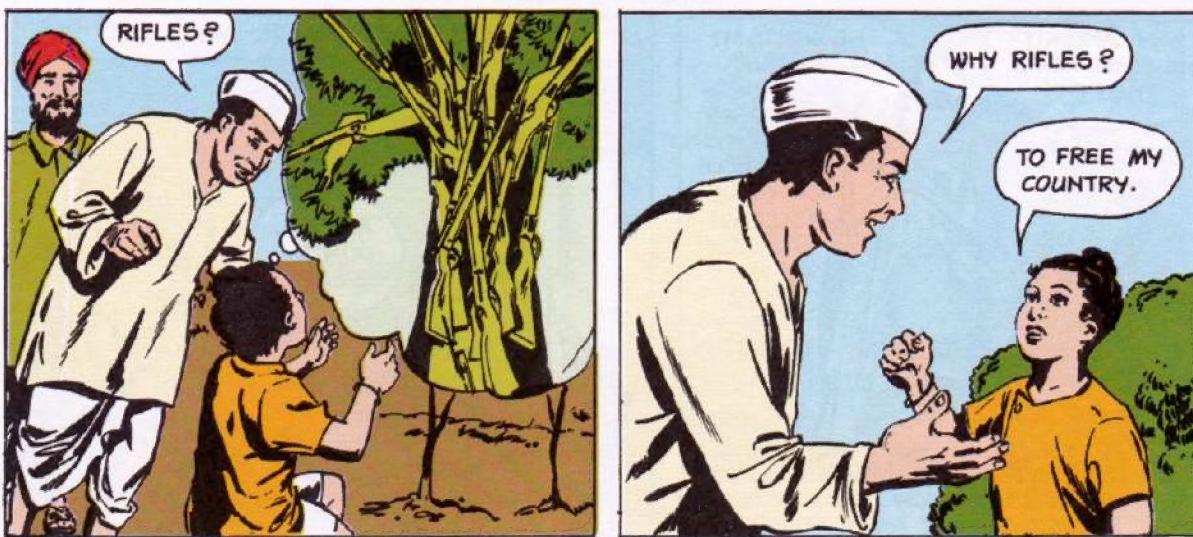


AJIT SINGH, THE SECOND BROTHER, WAS SERVING A SENTENCE IN THE MANDALAY JAIL IN BURMA.



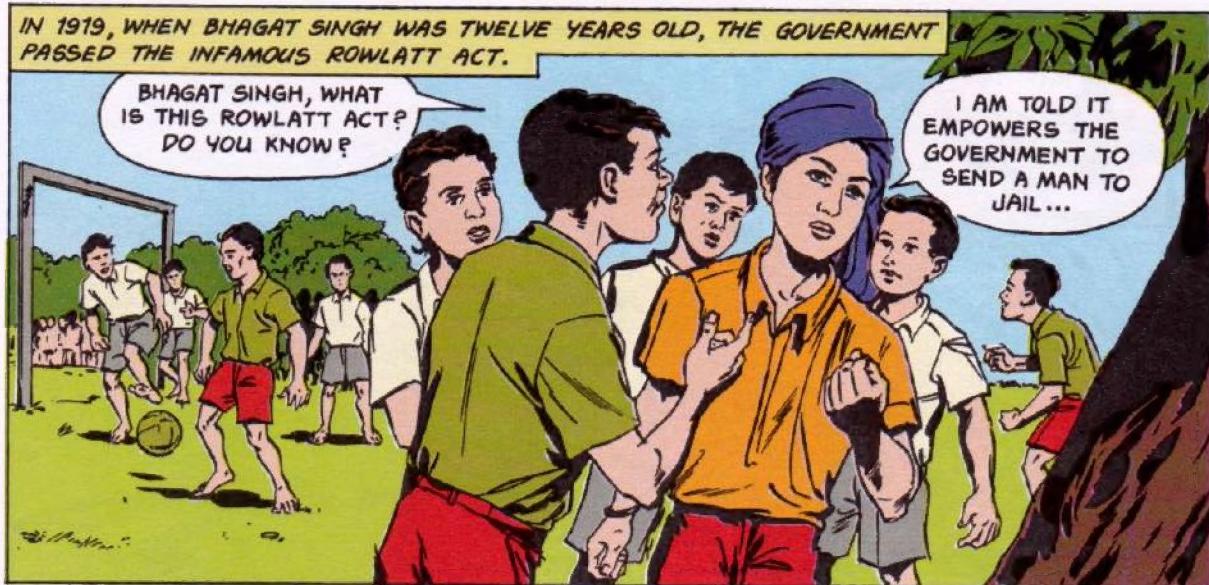
BHAGAT SINGH

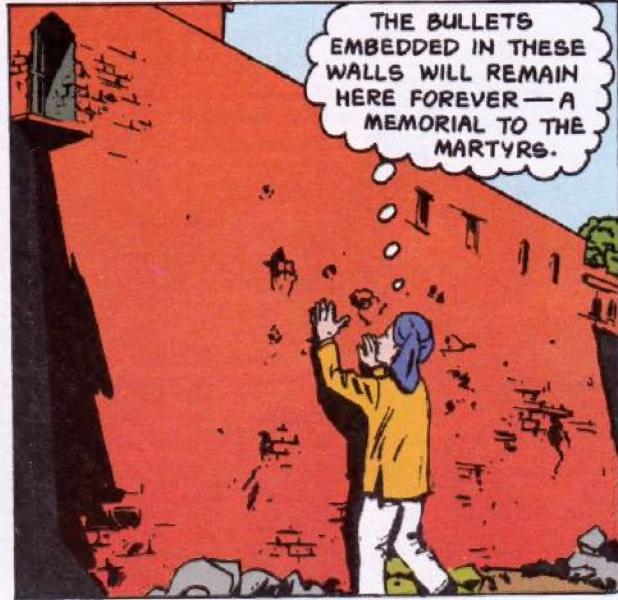
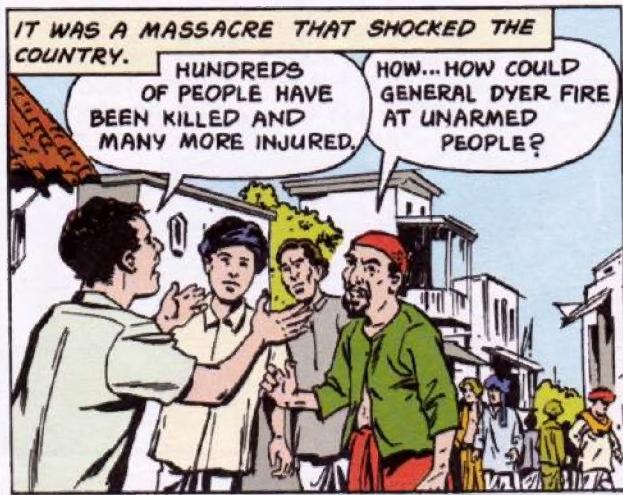
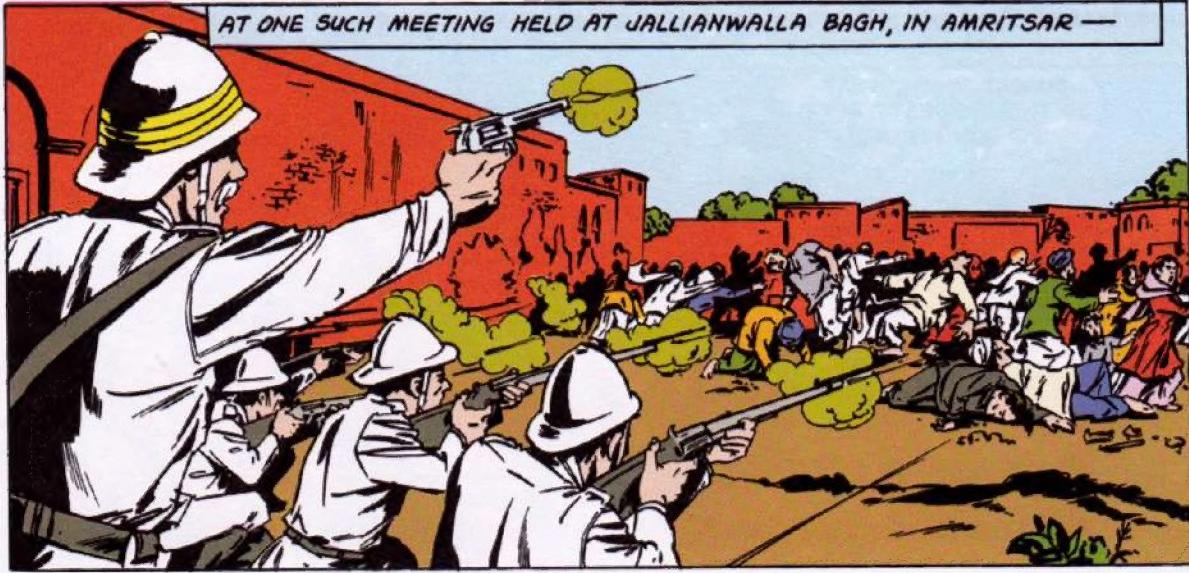




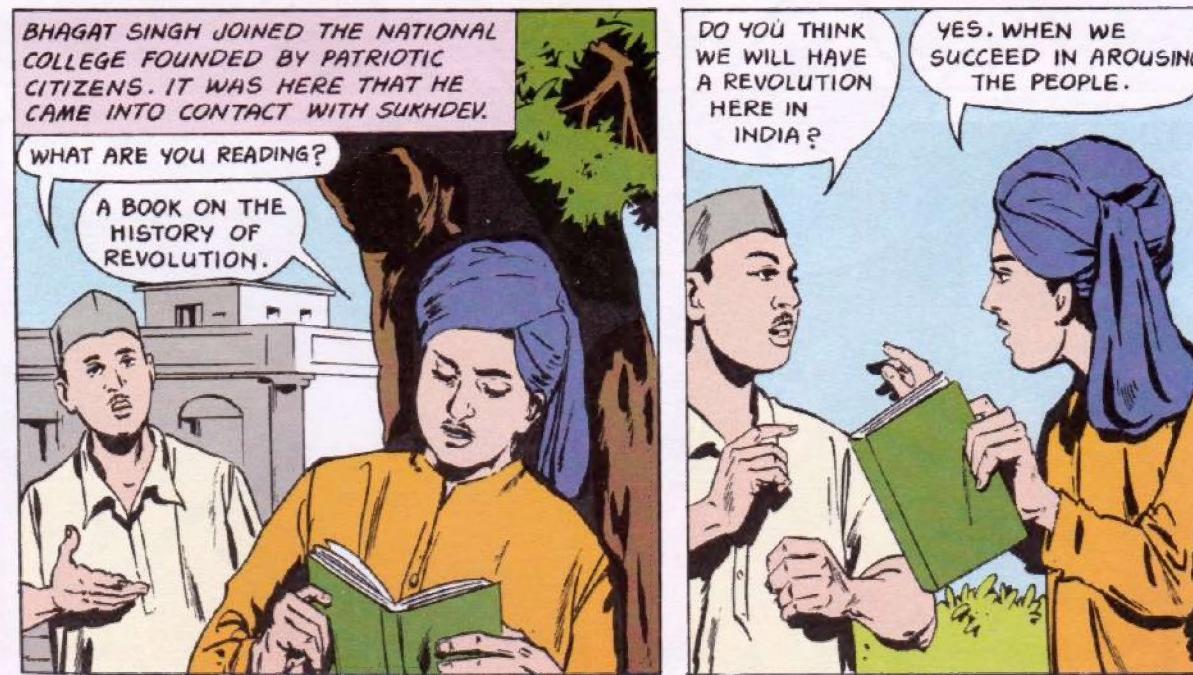
BHAGAT SINGH

IN 1919, WHEN BHAGAT SINGH WAS TWELVE YEARS OLD, THE GOVERNMENT PASSED THE INFAMOUS Rowlatt ACT.





BHAGAT SINGH





BHAGAT SINGH

BHAGAT SINGH WENT TO KANPUR AND MET GANESH SHANKAR VIDYARTHI, A GREAT PATRIOT.



YOUR PASSION IS LIKE THAT OF THE MOTH FOR THE FLAME. IT COULD PROVE FATAL.

I AM NOT UNAWARE OF THAT, SIR.



AND BHAGAT SINGH BEGAN TO WORK FOR VIDYARTHI'S PRATAP PRESS WHICH SPECIALISED IN NATIONALIST LITERATURE.



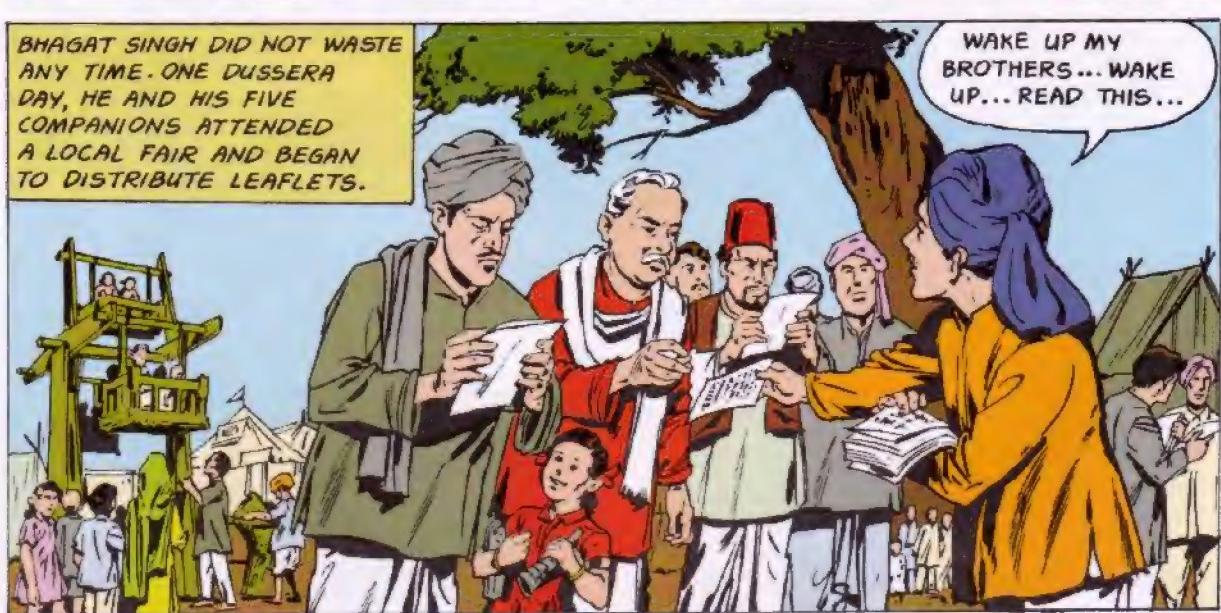
HE JOINED THE HINDUSTAN REPUBLIC ASSOCIATION.

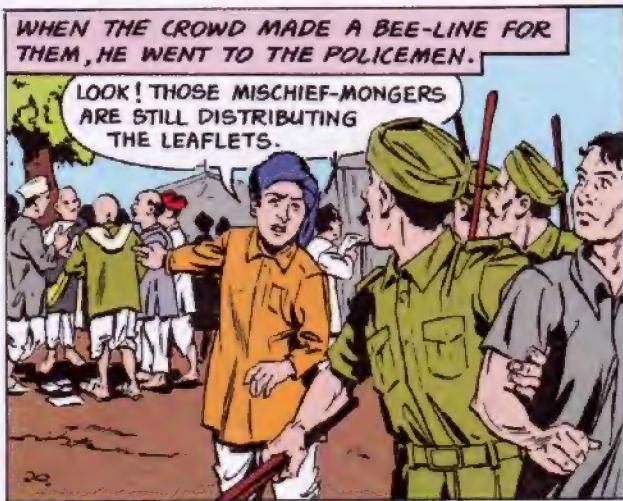
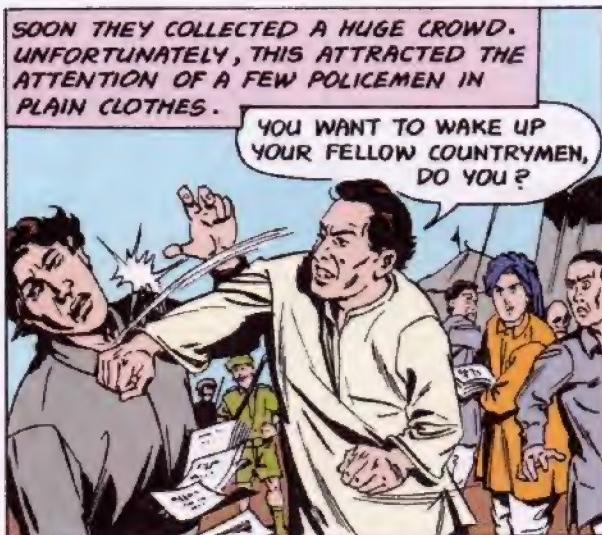
WE MUST EDUCATE OUR PEOPLE ON THE NEED FOR FREEDOM.

LEAVE THAT TO US, SIR.



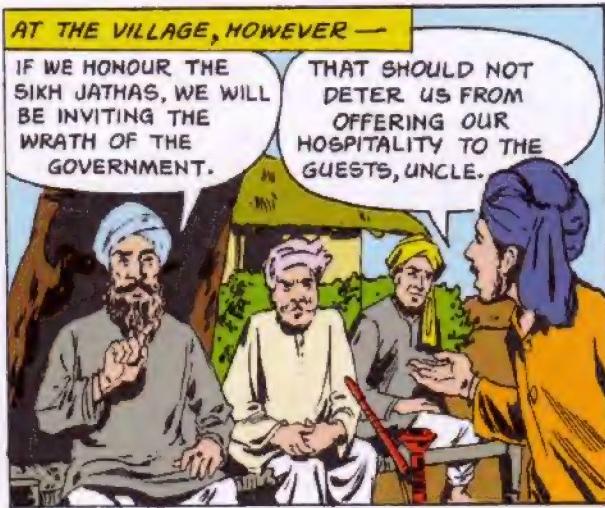
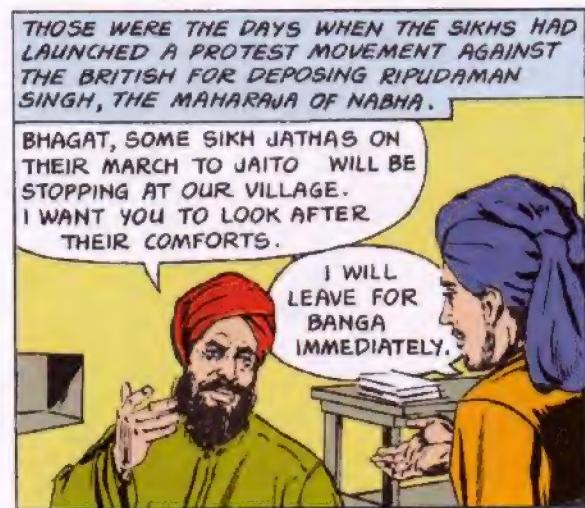
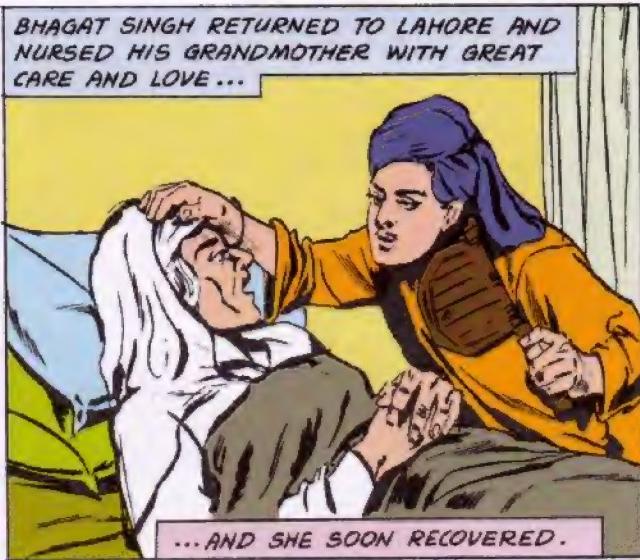
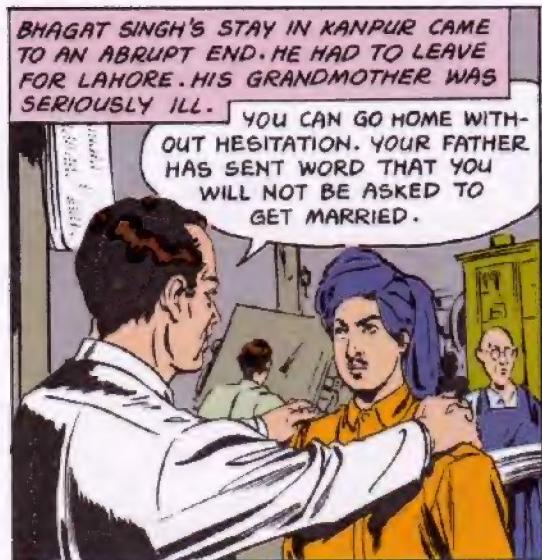
BHAGAT SINGH DID NOT WASTE ANY TIME. ONE DUSSEhra DAY, HE AND HIS FIVE COMPANIONS ATTENDED A LOCAL FAIR AND BEGAN TO DISTRIBUTE LEAFLETS.



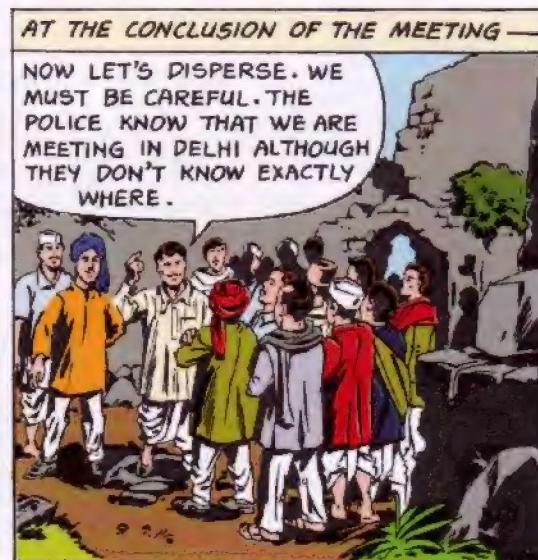
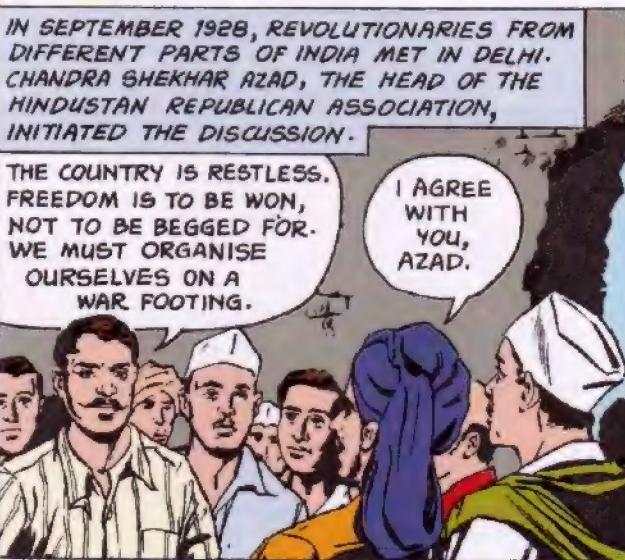
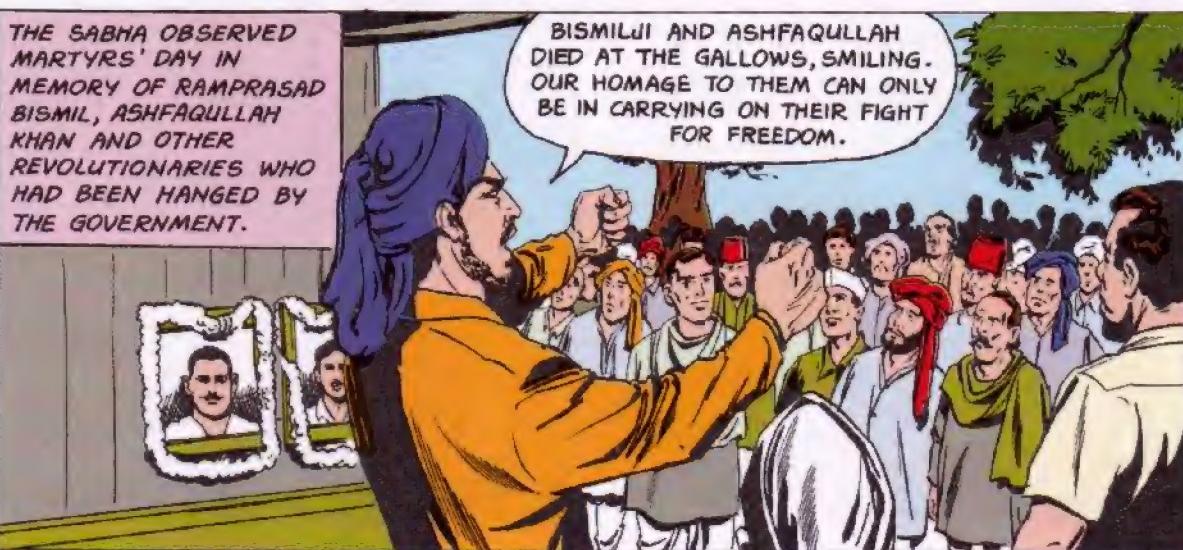
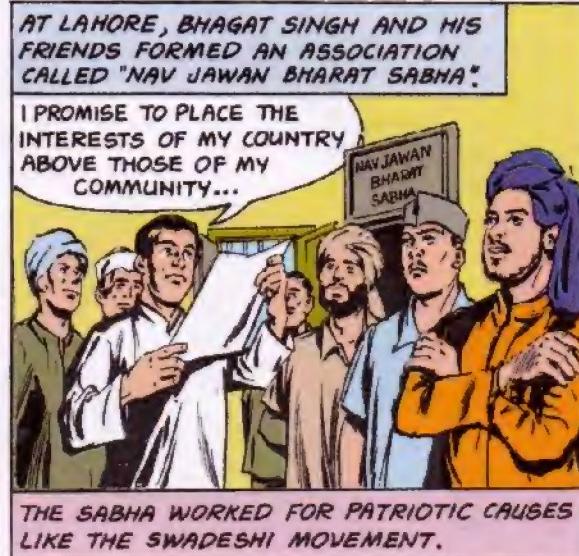
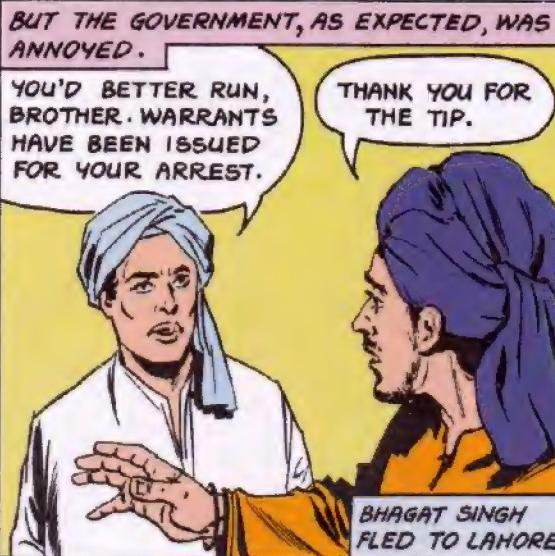


BHAGAT SINGH





BHAGAT SINGH



THEN, DRESSED AS A POLICE CONSTABLE, BHAGAT SINGH LEFT FOR LAHORE. AT THE DELHI RAILWAY STATION A POLICE OFFICIAL ENTERED HIS COMPARTMENT.

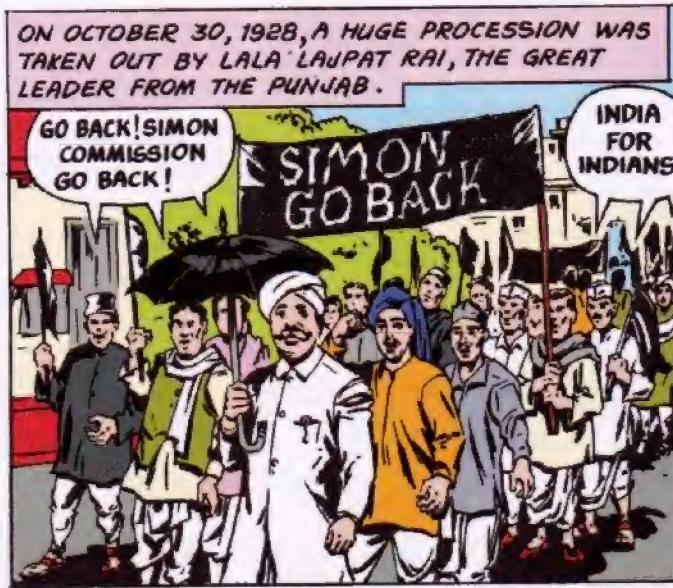
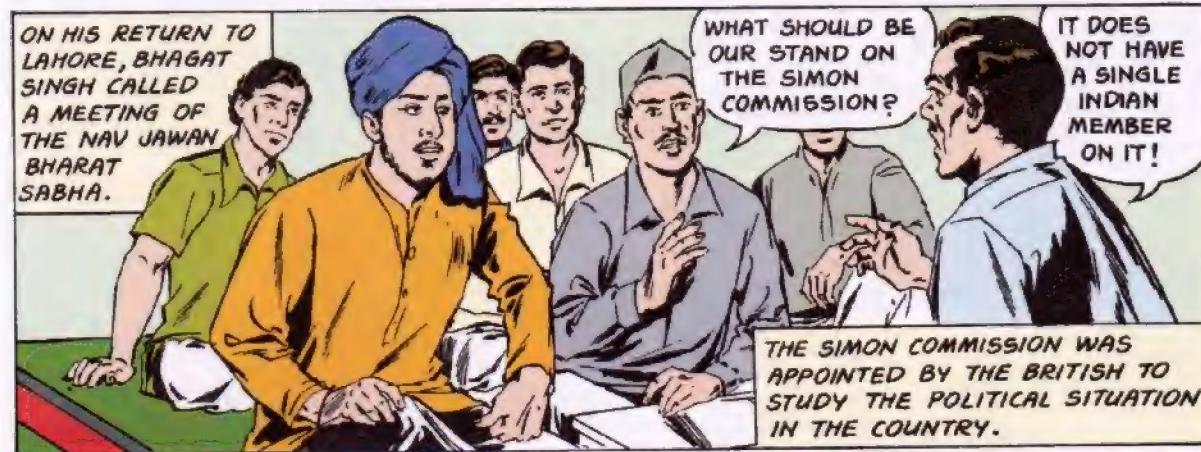
WHAT IS YOUR NAME? WHICH POLICE STATION ARE YOU ATTACHED TO AND WHY ARE YOU HERE?

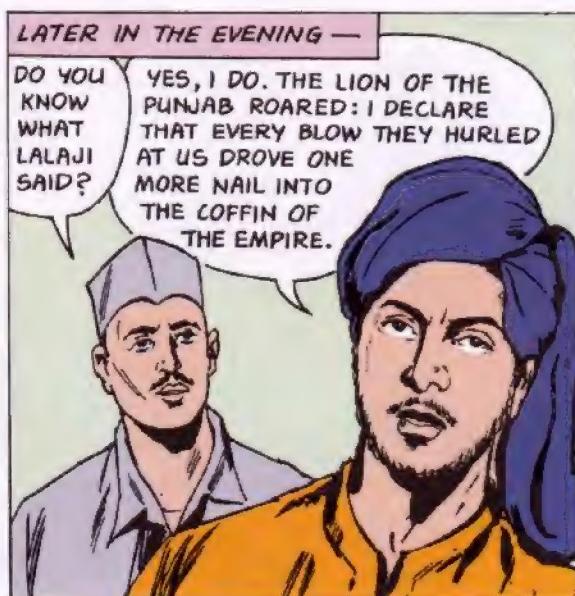
SIR, I AM KARTAR SINGH FROM NIHAI SINGH WALA POLICE STATION. I ESCORTED SOME PRISONERS TO DELHI.





LITTLE DID THEY REALISE THAT THE MAN THEY WERE LOOKING FOR WAS SEATED RIGHT THERE WITH A COPY OF THE GITA IN HIS HAND.





BHAGAT SINGH

LALAJI NEVER RECOVERED FROM THE BLOWS HE RECEIVED. HE DIED TWO WEEKS LATER.

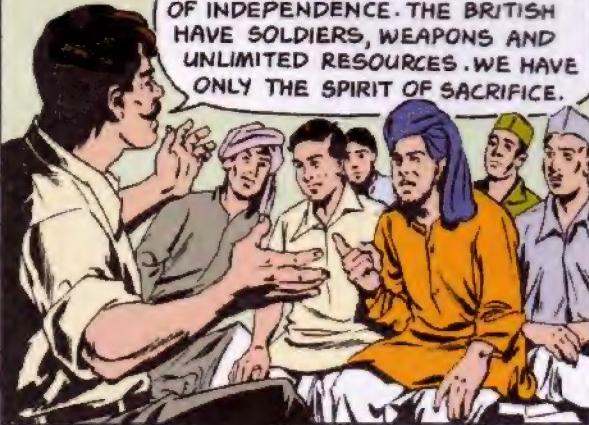
LALAJI'S NON-VIOLENCE WAS REWARDED WITH FATAL BLOWS.

THIS GOVERNMENT UNDERSTANDS ONLY ONE LANGUAGE—BLOOD FOR BLOOD.

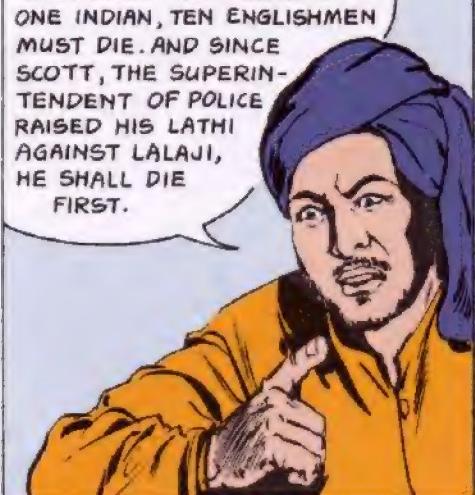


CHANDRA SHEKHAR AZAD NOW ARRIVED IN LAHORE TO DISCUSS PLANS FOR REVENGE.

FRIENDS, WE ARE FIGHTING A WAR OF INDEPENDENCE. THE BRITISH HAVE SOLDIERS, WEAPONS AND UNLIMITED RESOURCES. WE HAVE ONLY THE SPIRIT OF SACRIFICE.



TO AVENGE THE DEATH OF ONE INDIAN, TEN ENGLISHMEN MUST DIE. AND SINCE SCOTT, THE SUPERINTENDENT OF POLICE RAISED HIS LATHI AGAINST LALAJI, HE SHALL DIE FIRST.



ON DECEMBER 17, 1928, BHAGAT SINGH AND HIS COMRADE, RAJGURU TOOK THEIR POSITIONS NEAR THE POLICE STATION.

JAIGOPAL WILL SIGNAL TO US AS SOON AS SCOTT COMES OUT.



JAIGOPAL WHO HAD STATIONED HIMSELF JUST OPPOSITE THE POLICE STATION WAS PRETENDING TO REPAIR HIS BICYCLE.

LOOK! THAT OFFICER IS WALKING TOWARDS THE MOTOR-CYCLE. IS HE SCOTT?





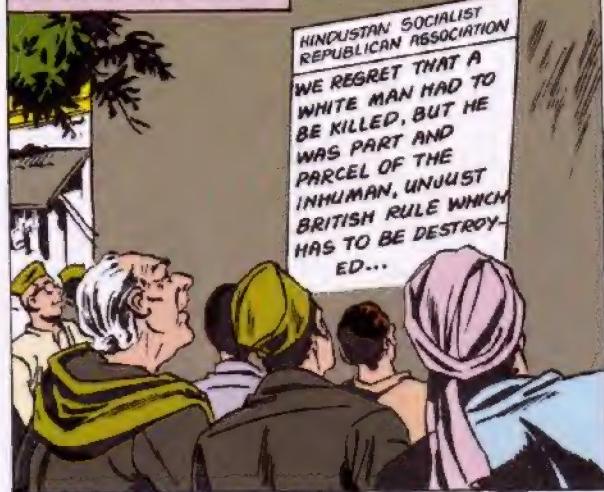
BHAGAT SINGH



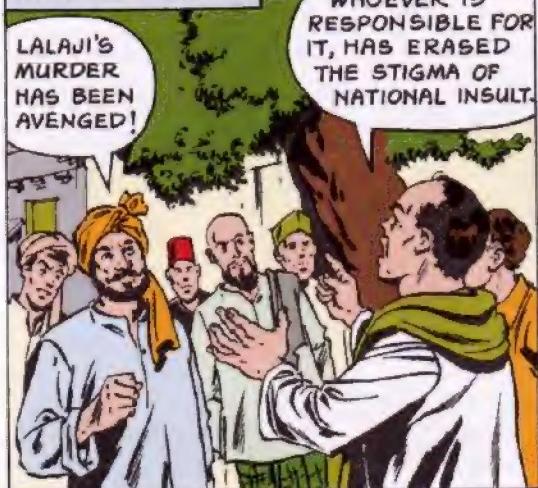
LATER, THEY REALISED THAT THE MAN THEY HAD KILLED WAS SAUNDERS, THE ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT OF POLICE AND NOT SCOTT.



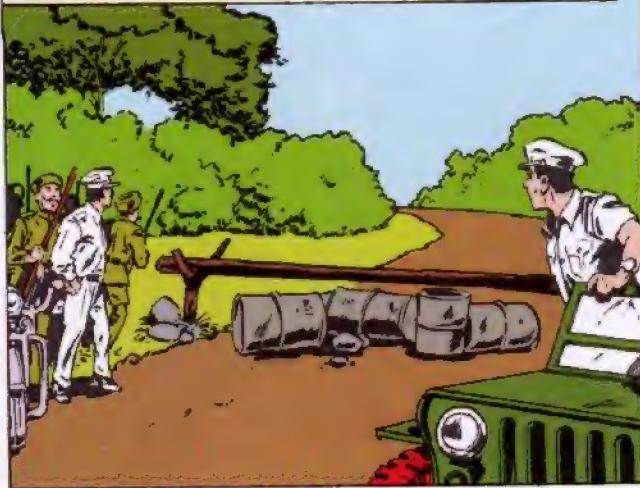
ON THE FOLLOWING DAY, NOTICES APPEARED ALL OVER THE CITY.



THE WHOLE OF THE PUNJAB RESOUNDED WITH THE NEWS.



MEANWHILE, POLICE GUARDS KEPT WATCH OVER ALL ROADS LEADING OUT OF LAHORE...

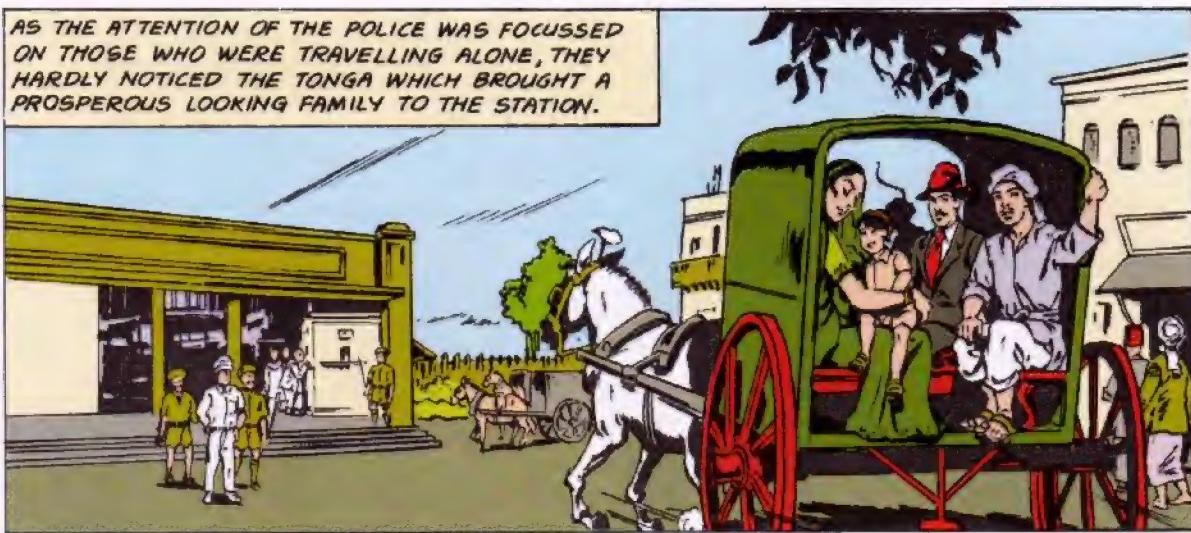


...AS WELL AS AT THE RAILWAY STATION.

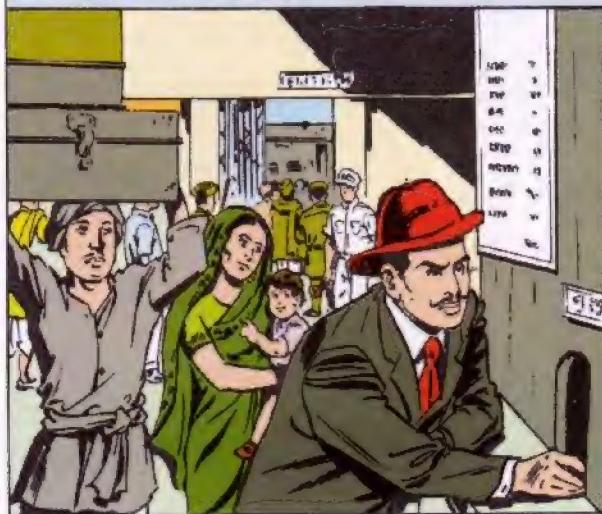


BHAGAT SINGH

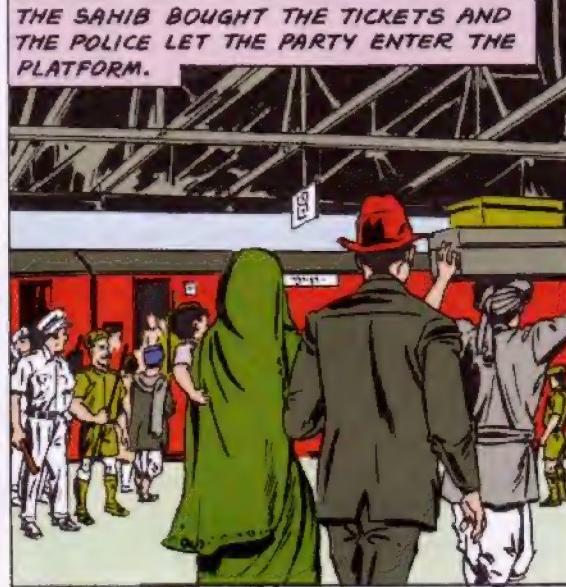
AS THE ATTENTION OF THE POLICE WAS FOCUSED ON THOSE WHO WERE TRAVELLING ALONE, THEY HARDLY NOTICED THE TONGA WHICH BROUGHT A PROSPEROUS LOOKING FAMILY TO THE STATION.



THE ELEGANTLY DRESSED SAHIB WALKED UP TO THE BOOKING OFFICE WINDOW. HIS WIFE AND CHILD AND A SERVANT FOLLOWED.



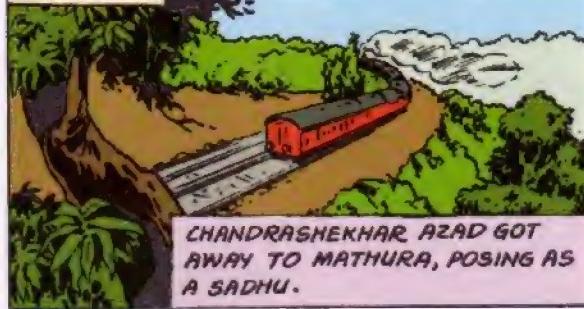
THE SAHIB BOUGHT THE TICKETS AND THE POLICE LET THE PARTY ENTER THE PLATFORM.



THE SAHIB AND HIS WIFE BOARDED A FIRST CLASS COMPARTMENT, AND THE SERVANT, A THIRD CLASS COMPARTMENT.



THE BIRDS HAD FLOWN! THE SAHIB WAS NONE OTHER THAN BHAGAT SINGH WHO HAD SHAVE OFF HIS BEARD TO AVOID DETECTION; THE WOMAN WHO POSED AS HIS WIFE WAS DURGA BHABHI, THE WIFE OF A REVOLUTIONARY, BHAGWATI CHARAN; AND THE MAN WHO ACCOMPANIED THEM AS THEIR SERVANT WAS RAJGURU!



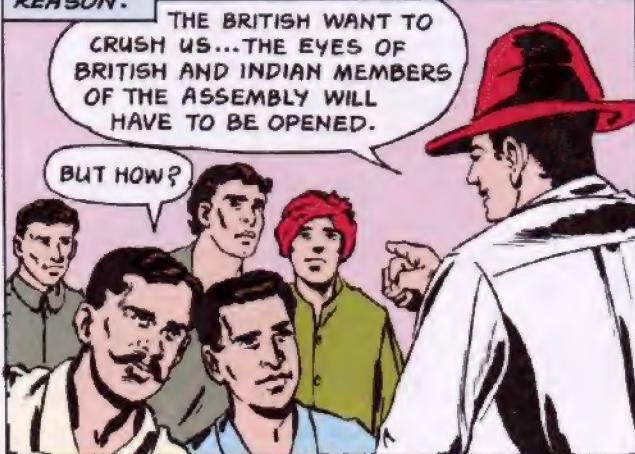
BHAGAT SINGH MEANWHILE HAD TRAVELED EASTWARDS TO CALCUTTA. THERE HE MET JATIN DAS, A REVOLUTIONARY.



LATER, A BOMB MANUFACTURING CENTRE WAS OPENED IN AGRA. AT A MEETING HELD THERE, THE REVOLUTIONARIES DISCUSSED THEIR FUTURE COURSE OF ACTION.



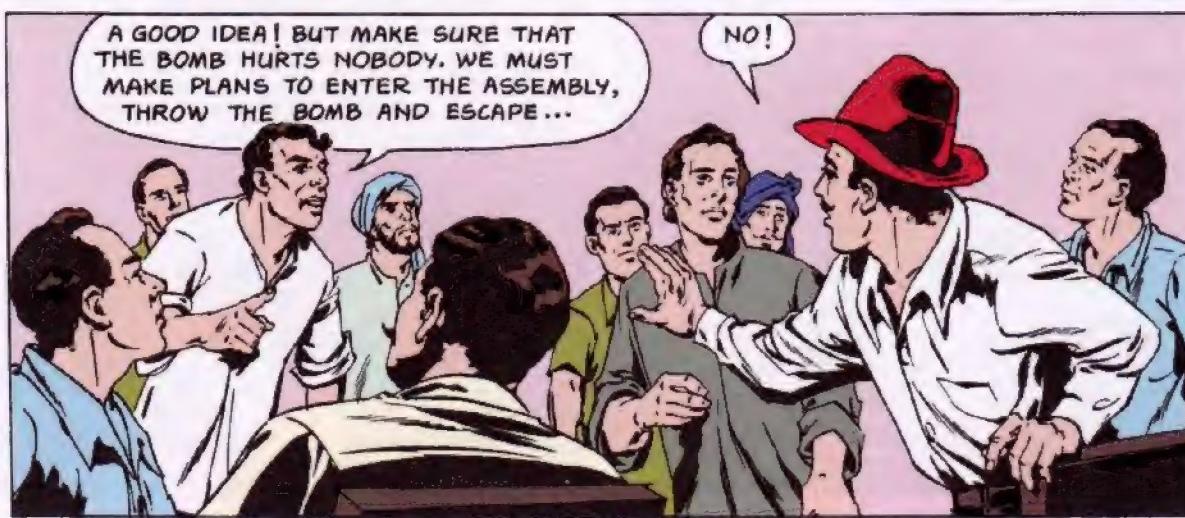
THESE BILLS WERE MEANT TO SUPPRESS THE LABOUR CLASS AND EMPOWERED THE GOVERNMENT TO JAIL ANYONE WITHOUT GIVING A REASON.



THE DAY THE BILL IS INTRODUCED, BOMBS SHOULD BE THROWN. WE WILL MAKE A NOISE LOUD ENOUGH TO BE HEARD BY THE DEAF.

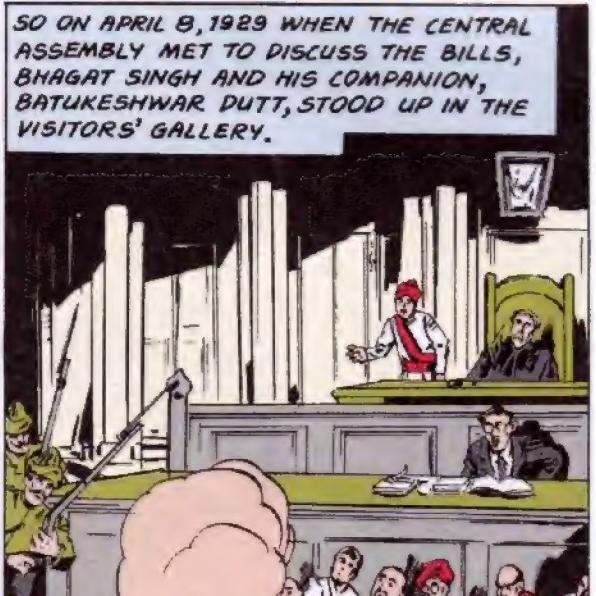
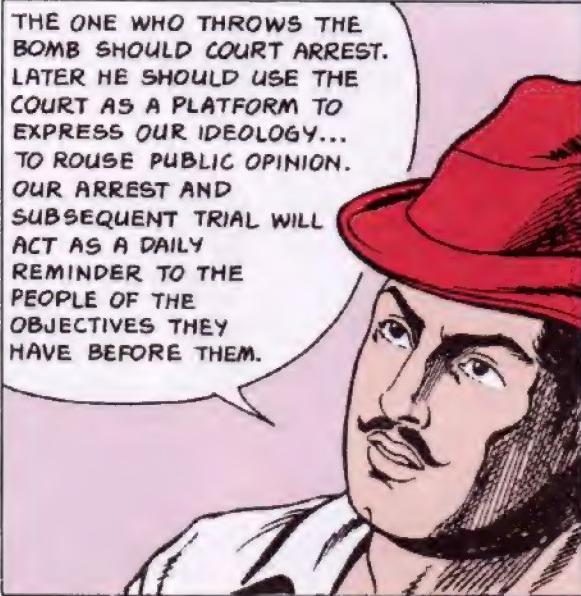


A GOOD IDEA! BUT MAKE SURE THAT THE BOMB HURTS NOBODY. WE MUST MAKE PLANS TO ENTER THE ASSEMBLY, THROW THE BOMB AND ESCAPE...



NO!

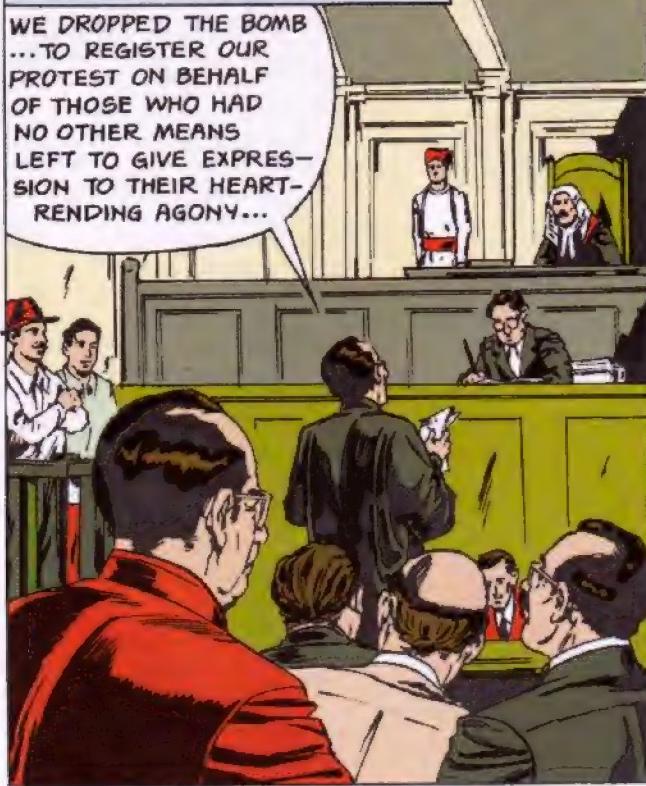
BHAGAT SINGH



BHAGAT SINGH AND DUTT WERE TAKEN TO THE POLICE STATION. ON THE WAY THEY PASSED THE TONGA CARRYING DURGA BHABHI, HER HUSBAND AND THEIR LITTLE SON.



LATER IN THE MAGISTRATE'S COURT, ASAFA ALI, THE LAWYER, READ OUT THE STATEMENT PREPARED BY BHAGAT SINGH.



BHAGAT SINGH

THE TWO REVOLUTIONARIES WERE SENTENCED TO TRANSPORTATION FOR LIFE. THEY FILED AN APPEAL IN THE HIGH COURT.

GENERAL DYER KILLED HUNDREDS OF PERSONS IN JALLIANWALLA BAGH. HE WAS GIVEN LAKHS OF RUPEES AS A REWARD BY HIS COUNTRYMEN.



IN CONTRAST, WE THROW A WEAK BOMB ENSURING THAT NO ONE IS HURT. WE ARE TRIED AND GIVEN A LIFE SENTENCE.



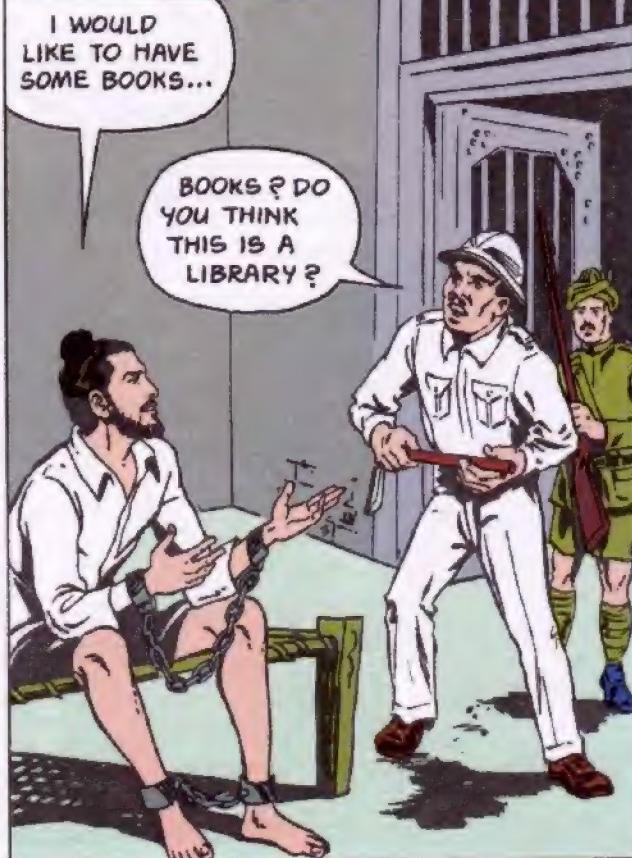
OUR MOTIVE WAS NOT TO KILL, BUT TO MAKE OUR IDEALS HEARD AND ACCEPTED.



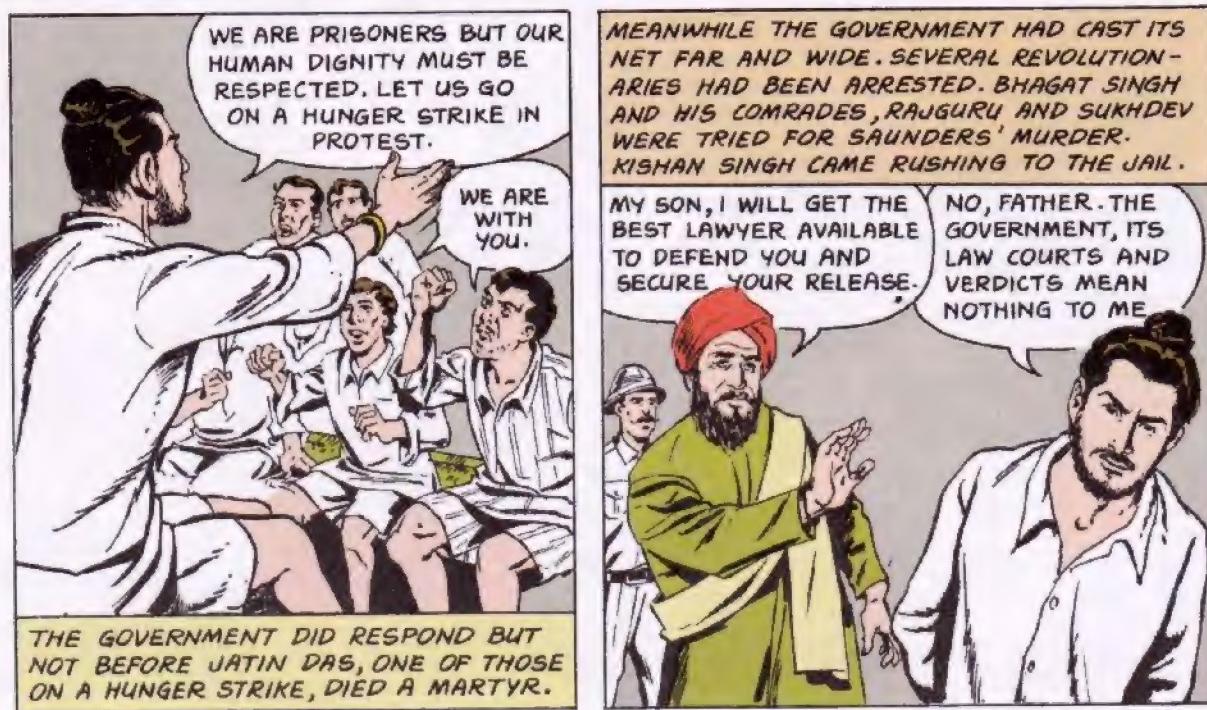
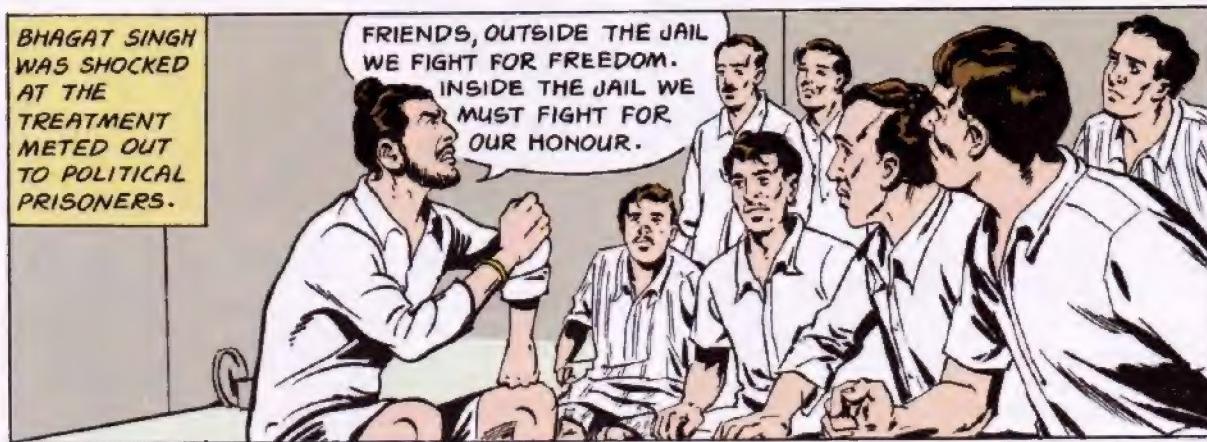
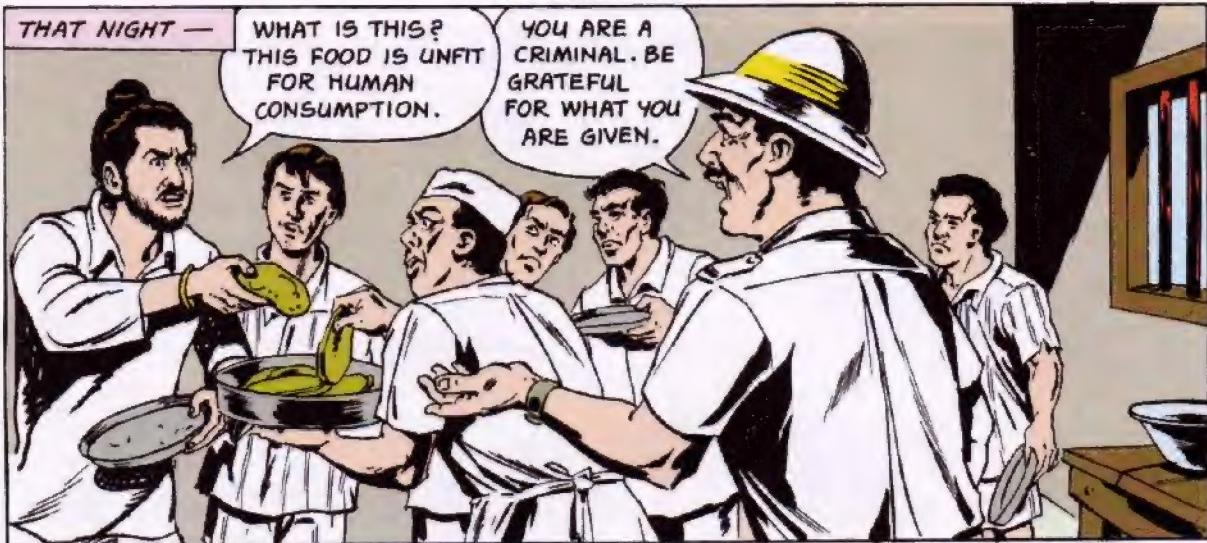
LATER BHAGAT SINGH WAS SHIFTED TO THE LAHORE CENTRAL JAIL.

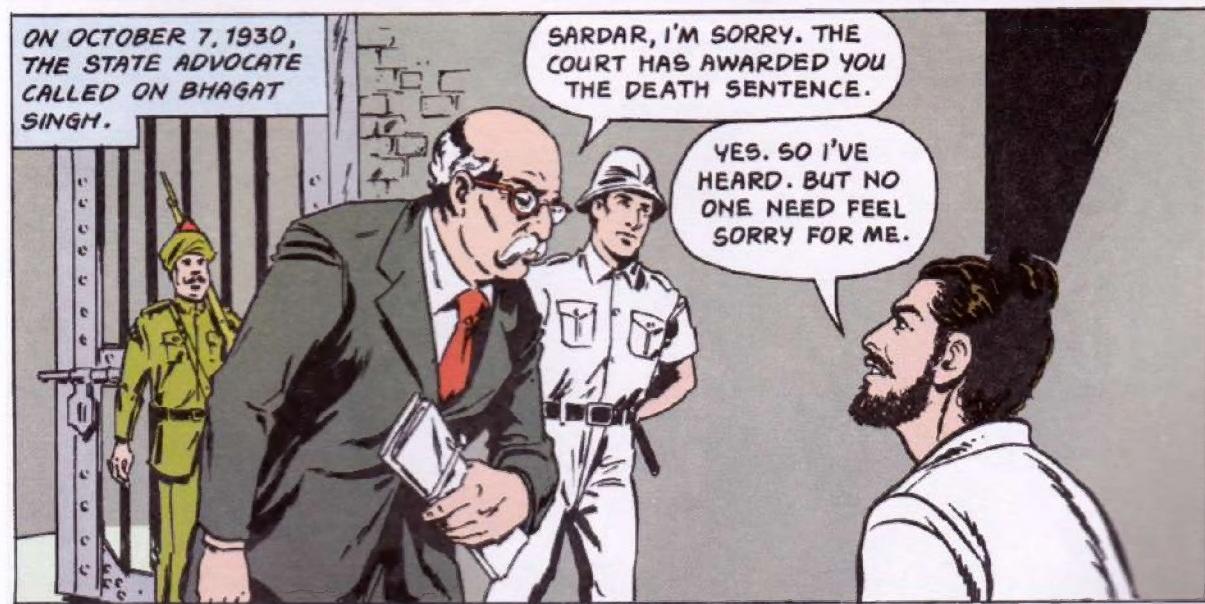
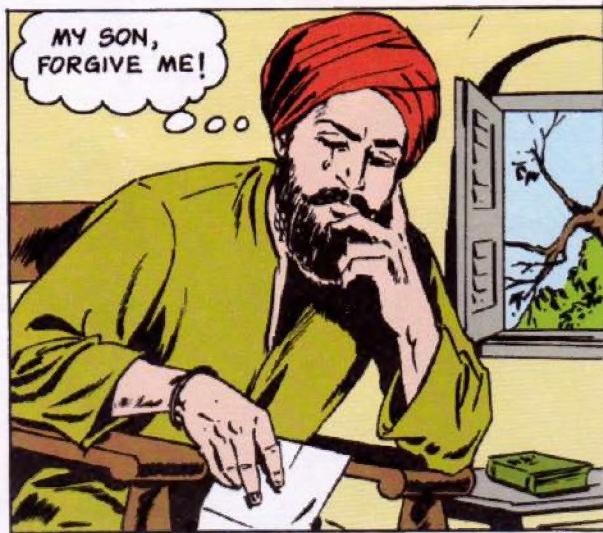
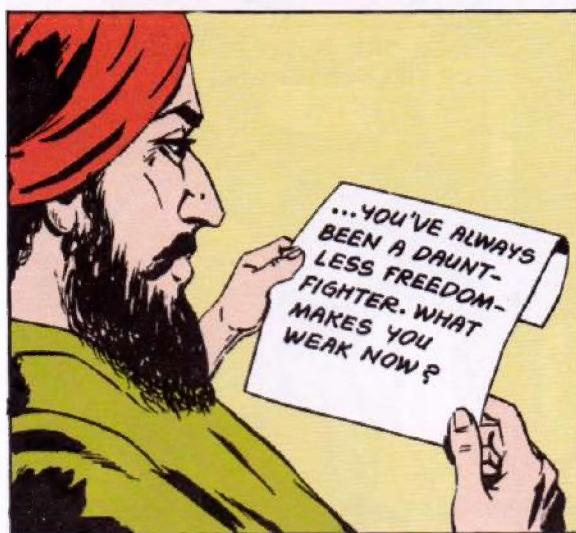
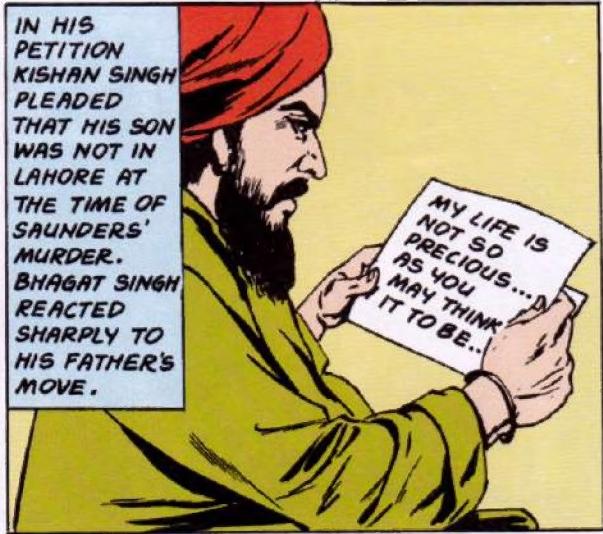
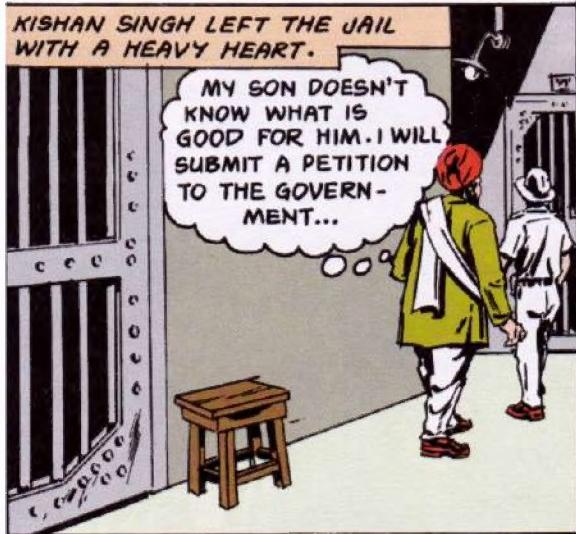
I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE SOME BOOKS...

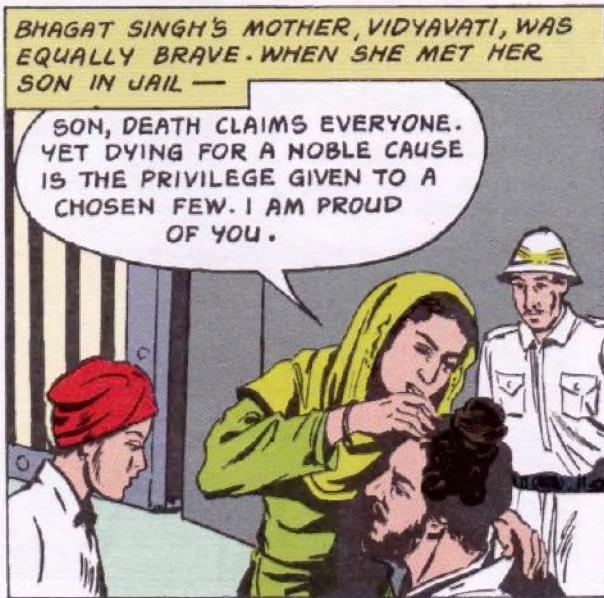
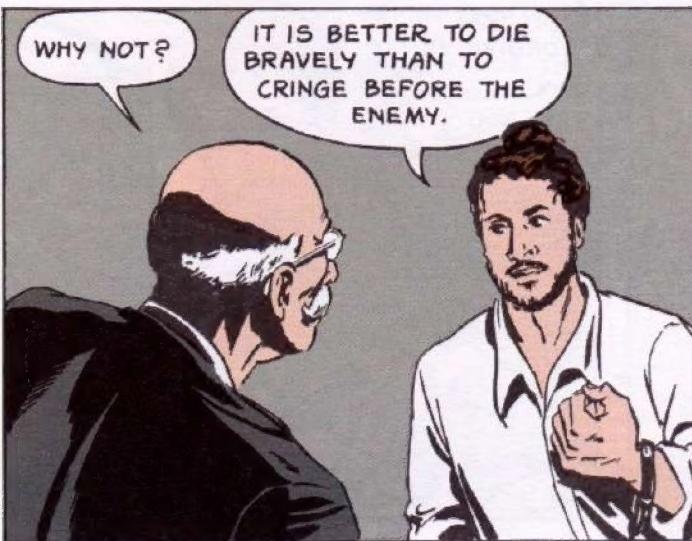
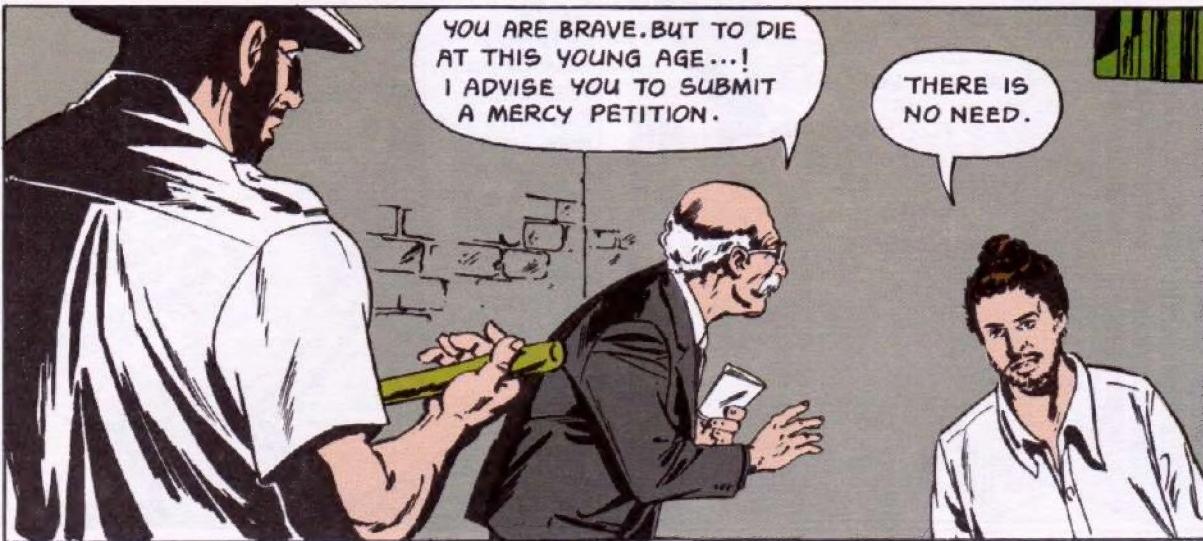
BOOKS ? DO YOU THINK THIS IS A LIBRARY ?



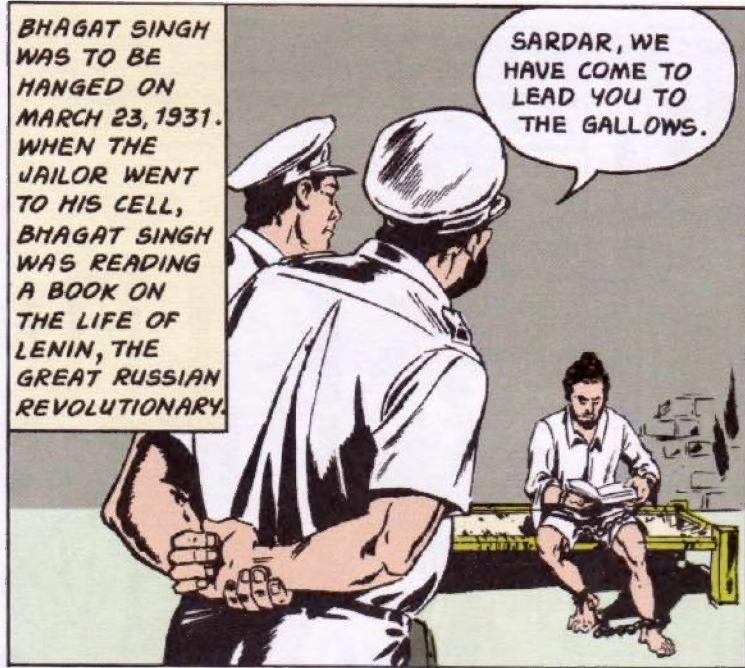
AS EXPECTED, THE HIGH COURT UPHELD THE JUDGEMENT OF THE SESSIONS COURT.



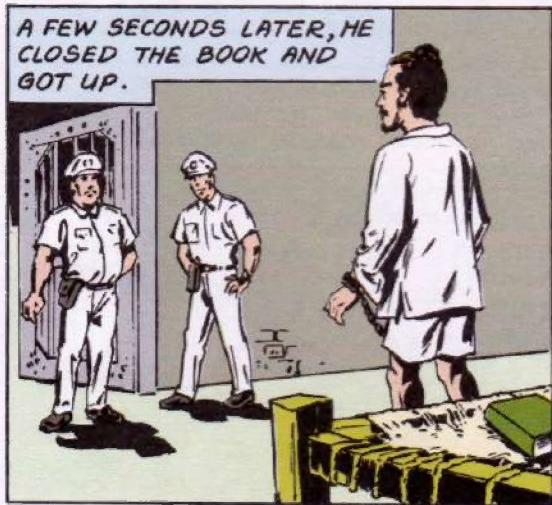




BHAGAT SINGH WAS TO BE HANGED ON MARCH 23, 1931. WHEN THE JAILOR WENT TO HIS CELL, BHAGAT SINGH WAS READING A BOOK ON THE LIFE OF LENIN, THE GREAT RUSSIAN REVOLUTIONARY.



A FEW SECONDS LATER, HE CLOSED THE BOOK AND GOT UP.



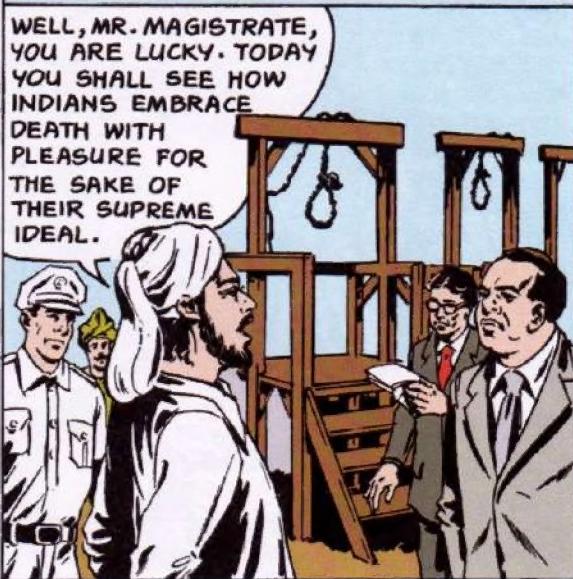
SUKHDEV AND RAJGURU WERE BROUGHT FROM THEIR CELLS. AT 7.00 P.M. THE LAST JOURNEY BEGAN. BHAGAT SINGH BURST INTO SONG.



HEARING THE SONG, OTHER PRISONERS IN THE JAIL RAISED PATRIOTIC CRIES.



THE THREE REVOLUTIONARIES MARCHED UP TO THE GALLows, WATCHED BY THE OFFICIALS. THEN BHAGAT SINGH TURNED TO THE BRITISH DEPUTY COMMISSIONER.



THEN THE LAHORE JAIL RE-SOUNDED WITH A POWERFUL CRY—



THE VOICE WAS STILLED FOR A MOMENT WHEN THE HANGMAN PULLED THE ROPE. BUT THE CRY WAS TAKEN UP BY MILLIONS OF INDIANS.



"THE LESSON WHICH WE SHOULD LEARN FROM BHAGAT SINGH IS TO DIE IN A MANLY AND BOLD MANNER SO THAT INDIA MIGHT LIVE," WROTE JAWAHARLAL NEHRU OF THIS VALIANT YOUNG MARTYR.

